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Briefer: Tom Casey, Deputy Spokesman

QUESTION: Can I go back to the CIA prisons --

MR. CASEY: Sure.

QUESTION: -- this report from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch and other NGOs, saying that 39 people are still unaccounted for. I understand that you don't have any specific information on these people, but the report specifies that among these people, among these 39, there were children from -- children 7 to 9 years old. Why -- how do you think you can criticize China human rights report when there are such reports published about the U.S.?

MR. CASEY: Well, I'll leave it up to the individuals that publish the report to explain what they think the factual basis for it is. I honestly can't speak to it. In terms of the issues that are raised there, again, I think the President made clear in his remarks in September of 2006 what kind of programs we were operating and the terms and conditions of them and I really just don't have anything to add to that.

QUESTION: Yeah, but doesn't it have -- well, the problem is your image is affected by these reports. How can you still criticize the human rights records of other countries when you have these kind of reports published around the world?

MR. CASEY: Well, if it were a requirement that every country that ever spoke about human rights was absolutely perfect, then I guess we couldn't. But as you heard the Secretary say, when she introduced our human rights report this year, we recognize that the United States -- in our own country does not always have a perfect record and historically has not always done so. That does not lessen the fact that the United States has been and continues to be the world's leading advocate for human rights around the world and it's a cause that we believe in, that is part of our values of our country, and one that we are going to continue to speak about. In fact, it would be a dereliction of our responsibility and a negation of our values if we didn't.

QUESTION: Tom, can I follow up --

MR. CASEY: Yeah.

QUESTION: -- one more question on that? Do you -- to your knowledge has there been any change in the position of U.S. detentions since the President's speech? In other words, I mean, my understanding of his speech, crudely put, was that there were no more prisoners -- that such prisoners had been held in such facilities were now all being transferred to Guantanamo Bay, and that, therefore, as of that moment there was no one

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else in any other form of, you know, detention. And the question is: To your knowledge, has that changed or has it not changed?

MR. CASEY: Yeah, I have no reason to believe that anything that the President said in September of '06 has changed, Arshad.

QUESTION: So in other words, you have no reason to think that there are -- that your belief is that no one is being held in secret prisons now?

MR. CASEY: My understanding is the information provided in that speech is still accurate.

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